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April 19, 2001 LB 598, 640

array of services? I don't know, but I think ...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR THOMPSON: ...we need the data and I'm not comfortable handing these decisions totally over to the department without a review by more than just the department if there are problems. I am not comfortable to go there. I think we need to amend this bill, to slow down this process and take a look at those issues. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Suttle.

SENATOR SUTTLE: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I wonder if we would be having this discussion if there was someone else in the Governor s Office than who is there now. It seems to me that I remember discussions when there was a Democrat in the Governor's Office, the Republicans were always mistrusting the department, mistrusting ability to do the job and now it seems to be maybe the other way around. The department doesn't change that much from one administration to the next. The oversight, the Policy Cabinet may change, but the people who work there and do the daily jobs seem to be the same people. I don't think that those people have anything but the best interest of juveniles in mind. I think that they are underfunded and overworked, and it concerns me that we are...we're going to take on more responsibility for We're going to take on more work for the the department. department and they are already swamped. And it seems to me that they are going to do this without the help of a lot of other people, and it concerns me. It concerns me especially for girls. Senator Pedersen, again, handed out where all this money is coming from and reminded us that LB 640 was a committee priority, well, he didn't remind us but I know that it's a committee priority bill because I'm on the committee that made it that, and it will be looking for more community-based I'm hoping that we have community-based services for services. girls as well as for boys, especially juvenile offenders. I want to get back to teen pregnancy. Female juvenile offenders engage in sexual activity at an earlier age than nonoffenders putting them at higher risk of sexually transmitted diseases and